lying within the domain of autonomous national economic policies. Our strategy has been to put as much international pressure as possible to deter the USA from pursuing the path of unilateralism.

Elections to the Legislative Assembly in Punjab

335. SHRI MURLIDHAR CHANDRAKANT BHANDARE: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Election Commission has fixed any dates for elections to the Legislative Assembly in Punjab; and

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI DINESH GOSWAMI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Review of Pepsi Project

336. SHRI SHANTI TYAGI: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news-item captioned "Doubts on Pepsi food processing" which appeared in the *Hindustan Times* of 27th January, 1990 to the effect that the All India Soft Drinks Manufacturers' Association expressed concern over the escalating cost of the Pepsi Project and wondered whether the US multinational had any interest in export or fruit processing; and

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto and whether they are going to have second thought over this project?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Divergent views have been expressed on the Punjab Agro Industries-Pepsico-Voltas project. They are under the active consideration of the Government.

Violation of RBI Norms by Institutions

337. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the report which appeared in the 'Financial Express' of 10th December, 1989 regarding violation of RBI norms by the institutions; and

(b) if so, what is the reaction of Government with regard thereto stating the remedial measures taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE): (a) and (b) Reserve Bank of India has reported that their attention has been drawn to the said press report. The matter is under their examination.

Raids conducted at the Business and Industrial Premises of Mr. Manu Chhabria

338. SHRI HARVENDRA SINGH HANSPAL :

SHRI DHULESHWAR MEENA :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence conducted raids at the business and residential premises of a leading non-resident Indian, Mr. Manu Chhabria in Bombay, Delhi and Bangalore during the month of January:

(b) if so, what are the details of articles such as gold, cash and other incriminating documents seized during the raids;

(c) whether Government have since taken any action against Mr. Mani Chhabria in this regard and if so, what are the details thereof; and

(d) what are the names of the companies in which Chhabria group are the leading shareholders?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The Officers of the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence searched the business and residential premises of Shri M.R. Chhabria and those of the Directors of two companies controlled by Shri M.R. Chhabria namely M/s Orson and M/s Nihon of Bombay in January, 1990. During the course of the searches, nothing incriminating was found from the residential premises of the Chairman and Directors of the above companies. However, some incriminating documents were seized from the office as well as factory premises of M/s Orson and M/s Nihon. Further investigations are still in progress.

(d) The information is being collected from the concerned Ministry and will be laid on the table of the House.

Directive to Commercial Banks for clearing local Cheques

339. SHRI HARVENDRA SINGH HANSPAL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that many commercial banks in the country are flouting the directives of the RBI in clearing cheques etc.

(b) whether the customer services in banks have become very poor; and

(c) if so, what steps Government have taken to improve the customer services in banks and see that the directives of the RBI are not flouted by banks ?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE): (a) to (c) Reserve Bank of India (RBI) have reported that they have not issued any statutory directive to public sector banks for clearing local cheques. However, they have advised the banks which are members of the clearing houses (particularly those at Bombay, Madras, New Delhi and Calcutta) to ensure that all local cheques deposited by their customers for collection are sent for clearing on the same day. Banks are mostly complying with these instructions.

As regards customer service in banks in general is concerned, various steps have been taken by banks to improve the service rendered by them to their customers. These steps include *inter alia* evolution of time norms for rendering common services, speedier clearance and collection of cheques through computerisation of clearing houses and increased use of courier service, extending to individuals the facility of immediate credit of outstation cheques upto Rs. 2500/-, payment of interest at savings bank rate for delayed collection of outstation cheques beyond 10/14 days, etc.

Steps to maintain Country's Foreign Exchange Reserves

340. SHRI HARVENDRA SINGH HANSPAL: Will the